

Analysis of Parents Attitude towards Females Higher Education in Remote Areas

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Abstract

Females are essential and undeniable part of human population as they form half of the human society. Pakistan is considered amongst those countries where female literacy rate is low. The literacy rate among rural female is 29%. Current study was conducted in rural area of district Bhakkar in order to analyze parents' attitude towards female higher education to explore and highlight the facts behind the literacy rate of females in Pakistan. A sample of size 200 respondents was selected through multistage random sampling technique and interviewed. The analysis reveals that literacy rate among parents was one of leading contributing factor towards female education. Families with sound educational background showed positive attitude towards females' education and vice versa. Moreover monetary factor remained of great value in the field of higher education. Families with good financial position showed positive attitude towards female's higher education as compared to families with economically weak position. Majority of the parents were in favour to educate their daughters in order to make them active member of society. The overall percentage of parents in favour of female education was 88% that was contradicting to the researches conducted earlier in rural areas of Punjab Province. Resisting factors for female education were found poverty, lack of awareness, traditional and cultural constraints, lack of conveniences and illiteracy among parents. Efforts should be made to provide physical facilities such as building of school, transportation and

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presence of female staff to make parents more contented towards female education.

Keywords

Higher education, Attitude, Parents, Female Students

Introduction

Knowledge makes human kind superior to other creations. It is the knowledge which makes us able to learn new ideas and evaluate the situation. In Islam there is high value of acquiring knowledge. Many verses highlight the importance of knowledge and education in the exalted Quran such as at one place Allah Almighty says knowledge-full and ignorant cannot be equal. In exalted Quran, Allah orders the people to get up and find the mystery of the world. Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ) said “acquisition of knowledge is essential for every Muslim male and female (Asghar, 1981).

Before the arrival of Islam in Indo-Pak Subcontinent the social status of women was very low. The women didn't enjoy any social status. (Ghosh & Roy, 1997). The major and most prominent religion in this area is Hinduism. Hinduism divides humans into casts and categories and cast is the factor that determines the superiority or inferiority of a person (Singh, 2018).

When Islam came in this region many people embraced Islam and became Muslim. The Muslims of Subcontinent had for centuries lived with the Hindus which occasionally tinged the social life of Muslims with Hinduism and has left some imprints on their social norms customs and values. One of the such influence defused in Muslim culture was the base and degraded status of female children. People liked to educate their male children and avoid that for girls. According to them boys were the bread winner of the family so, they have the right to be educated while the duty of the girls is only to take care of the house and children so, she doesn't need education (Hafeez, 2005).

In the age of inflation one person can't nourish the whole family. It is necessary that females should stand alongside the males as per evolving social needs. It is considered that educated women can provide outcome as similar to men (Poduval & Poduval, 2009). In the

contemporary majority parents are now aware of their duties and the fact that educated women can socialize and train their child in best way. She can make the child an efficient and beneficial member of the society (Din, 1952b). This study was designed to find the role of education in the development of positive approach, enhanced behaviour and modify thinking.

Objectives:

The present investigation study was carried out in order

- To find out the parents' attitude towards female higher education in District Bhakkar.
- To get aware of attitude of educated and uneducated parents towards education of their daughters.
- To investigate the parental social, cultural and economic barriers to educate their daughters.
- To point out the social and educational problems faced by females in rural area.
- To suggest some measures for improvement of female higher education.

Endorsing Researches

Role of Islam in Women Education:

In the Holy Quran Allah says; "Read in the name of Sustainer who created" (Surah Al-'Alaq (96;1) this is the first afflatus. It declares the importance of knowledge and education in Islam. The first word of first afflatus is "read" and only the educated one can read so the hidden messages is to get educated (al-alaq). in another surah of Quran Allah says always pray to me in such words:

"Oh my Sustainer!.. Advance me in knowledge" (Ta Ha; 114)

Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ) said "At the end of life when one dies everything related to him stops but three keep going on. One is charity being done by him, knowledge being delivered by him and the virtuous offspring who do pray for him" (Abu Daud; 32). Islam allows everyone to get education without any discrimination of cast colour creed (Asghar,

1981). Islam allows the Muslims both male and females to get knowledge (Din, 1952a).

Women's Role in Society

Females' education is essential for social harmony and highest development in life as they play great role in the progression of any society. Societies in which females are literate and well educated are well managed, developed and arranged (Aragon & Miller, 2018). Beneficial role in the society can be played by women by acquiring knowledge. If the women of the society are literate then they can help their males economically by getting suitable jobs as well. In many countries women work alongside the males in every sphere of life (Hussain, 1964). According to Omaid (2006), in modern age it is very essential that the women of the society work alongside the men of the society. It is general truth that the education of man is the education of an individual while education of females is the education of whole society. Females have large potential but their potential is not being utilized by their parents or by relatives. Moreover females living in rural area are deprived of basic facilities so they can't play an efficient role in development of society without being educated (Saleh, 2008).

Why Parents do not Send their Daughters to Schools

According to Stith et al (2003), often there are social and cultural reasons to not make females a potential candidate for higher education. Economical factor has also great involvement in the field of education. In a study conducted by Shahzad (2011), it was found that majority of the parents showed full interest in education of girls but they could not do so due to economic restraints. Similar results were shown by Shabbir et al. (2003) with a percentage of 21.3%. Many parents do not send their daughters to schools because of low level of facilities being provided at basic level (Daraz, 1998). Economically strong families depicted higher attitude towards female's higher education as compared to the families with economically weak position (Mukhtar, 1979). Therefore, the availability of the resources has much to do in the field of females' higher education as reported by Ijaz (1985) and Bushra (1992). Cultural belief and attitude of the head of the family plays a vital role in deciding level of female education (Iqbal et al., 2013). Many parents think that to

educate females is just wastage of time and resources as the education of females will never prove fruitful for them so they preferred their sons, following the notion that sons will earn facilities for them. 52% parents were reported to be in favour of boys' schooling as compared with that of girls by Nevtaj and Naimatullah (2014). Household responsibilities of the girls were an added constraint in pursuit of education as majority of the parents needed their girls in homes for domestic work (Uzma, 2017).

The educational background of the family is a key factor in females' education. Educated parents consider education important for females as well (Ubaid and Bushra, 2015). In another study it was found that families with an educational background showed a positive attitude towards females' education and vice versa (Hafeez, 2005). Presence of physical facilities is an important perspective while discussing about girls' education (Caro, 1986). Girls' exposure within the public area during travel to and from school and in mixed-gender schools were other causes of hesitation acting as a barrier for parents for not sending their daughters to school (Nevtaj and Naimatullah, 2014). Fears of losing parental control and women empowerment are some other apprehensions for eradicating girls' education (Uzma, 2017).

Customs Which Deviate from Islam

Education is the main and foremost object that can upgrade the standard of female life styles, their judgment pattern and their personality. Prophet Mohammad (ﷺ) declared education as religious duty for both male and females as no one is superior or inferior in the court of Allah Almighty. If we observe this *hadith* in current scenario, we come to know that in some cases people are willing to educate the boys but not eager to educate the daughters (Hussain, 1964). They discriminate with their daughters in education, level of education, facilities, provision of educational resources and even in pocket money (Masooma, 2004). The educational backwardness of people is due to their traditional attitude towards female education (Shabbir et al, 2003). Socio-cultural factors are influencing girls' access to education. Key socio-cultural factors that hinder girl's education were early marriage, traditional ceremonies, male preference, social perception and social roles (Neema and Ren, 2017). Bushra (1992) recommended that change in old traditional and value system was of considerable importance.

When discussing about females education, one must observe the education level of the parents - the higher the level of parent's education is, the higher will be their interest in educating their daughters (United Nation, 1975).

Methodology

The methodology comprised of data collection, data analysis and interpretation. The study was conducted in the area of Bhakkar (District of Punjab, Pakistan). This area has the availability of different schools for girls and boys.

Sampling

To achieve the objectives of study, quantitative type of research was applied. All the respondents belonged to District Bhakkar. In order to collect data from respondents, an interview schedule was developed. To check the reliability and validity of tool of data collection 10 respondents were taken for pre-testing. After pre-testing, necessary amendments were made. Through multistage sampling method 200 respondents were selected and interviewed. The result of pre testing was not included in final results.

Data Analysis

The tool of data collection contains 29 questions which were related to the study and important to be known in order to get realistic and true picture of the said problem.

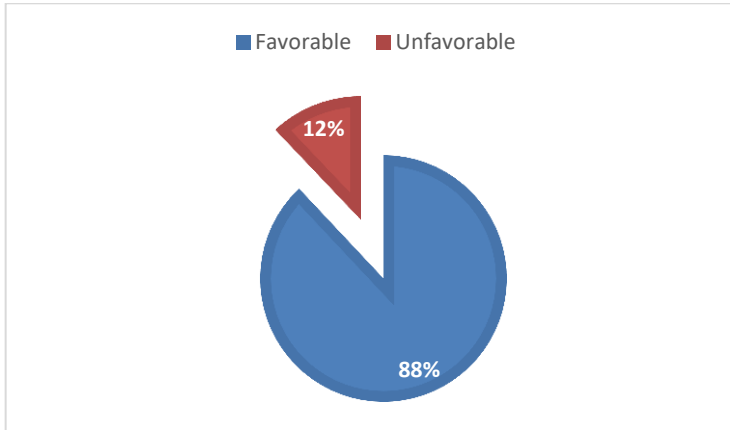
All the data was analysed by using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). After analysing the result, it appeared that majority of the respondents (88.0%) were in the favour of their daughters' higher education. As it is observed in previous researches majority of the respondents (60.5%) were not in the favour of females' jobs.

Table 1) Respondents' distribution according to their view on female education

Attitude towards female education	Frequency	Percentage
Favourable	176	88.0

Unfavourable	24	12.0
Total	200	100.0

Graph 1) Graphical representation of respondents view on female education

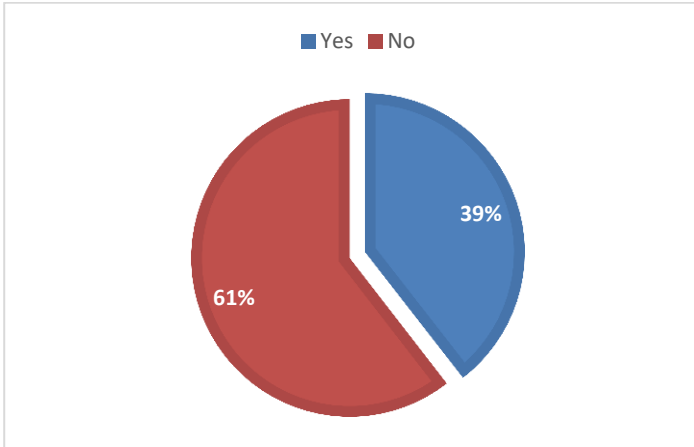


In the light of results shown in table no. 1, majority of the respondents (88%) were in the favour of the female education and they insisted that education is necessary for females in order to live a graceful and respectable life in the society. Only 12% of the respondents were not in the favour of female education and they did not consider female education as important need of female children.

Table 2) Respondents distribution according to their intent for allowing daughters to get a job or not

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	79	39.5
No	121	60.5
Total	200	100.0

Graph 2) Graphical representation of the respondents according to allow their daughter to doing a job.

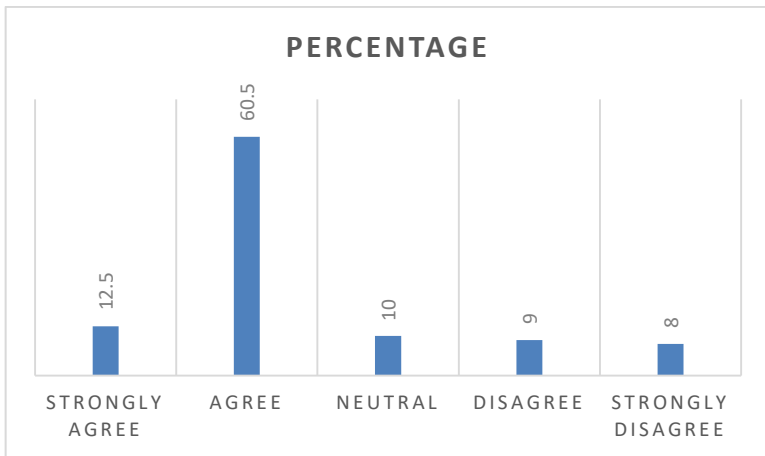


In the traditional environment of subcontinent, it is general concept that the duty of male is to earn and the duty of female is to look after the home and children. When the question was asked whether they will allow their daughter to do a job? Majority of the respondents (61%) replied No while 39% of the respondents said yes.

Table 3) Respondents' distribution according to their perception about the statement "higher education teaches girls good manners"

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	25	12.5
Agree	121	60.5
Neutral	20	10.0
Disagree	18	9.0
Strongly disagree	16	8.0
Total	200	100.0

Graph 3) Graphical representation of the respondents according to their perception about the statement “higher education teaches girls good manners”



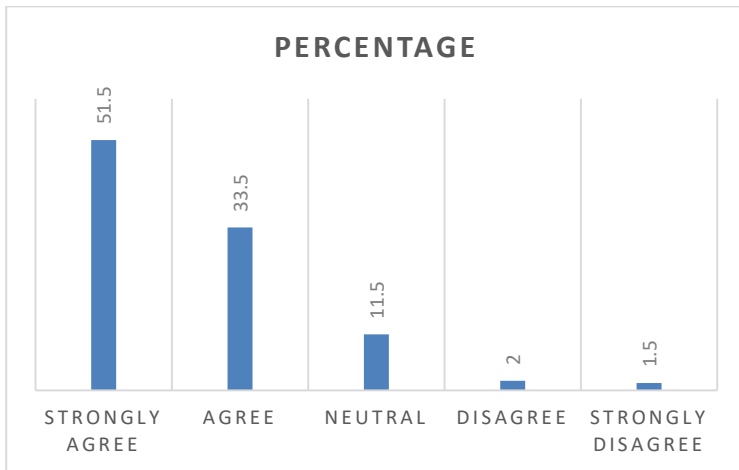
According to the results 12.5% of the respondents strongly agreed with the statement that higher education teaches girls good manners, while majority of the respondent (60.5%) agreed that higher education teaches good manners to the girls and 10% of the respondent didn't show any response and stayed neutral while 9% of the respondents disagreed and only 8% of the respondents strongly disagreed. This shows people have feelings that education provides good manners to females for better life in society. In general it is assumed that an educated woman is better able to conduct herself within her home and society. She is guided by her learning to resolve the matters of her life. Even in her daily pursuits, she depends on wisdom she acquired from knowledge and education. She can be more helpful mother for her children. Educated women can definitely make a positive impact on the socio-economic atmosphere in the society. Woman can bring about a change not only in her family but also in her community and society at large.

Table 4) Respondents' distribution according to their perception about the statement “Educating Females mean educating family”

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	103	51.5

Agree	67	33.5
Neutral	23	11.5
Disagree	4	2.0
Strongly disagree	3	1.5
Total	200	100.0

Graph 4) Graphical representation of the respondents according to their perception about the statement “educating female means educating family”



The above table asserts the facts that majority of respondents (51.5%) strongly agreed with the statement that educating female mean educating family and 33.5% of the respondents agreed while only 11.5% of the respondents didn't show any response and 2.0% of the respondents disagree and only 1.5% of the respondent strongly disagreed with the statement. This shows that general people have intent of female education and they feel that educated families can be constructed through female education. With a changing world, people have seen how positively an educated woman can contribute to family. Her contribution is evident in several ways. Since she knows about the world around her and has gained the perception of the world through a combination of her experience and the knowledge, she can look into the matters more

practically. She can better handle the affairs of her family for example, when someone is sick and needs care. Societies seeking the financial stability can find educated woman as successful entrepreneur. Study shows that this realization has prevailed that if one wants to see a woman doing her essential duties more fruitfully in society as well as in her home, a woman should be educated.

Conclusion

After the analysis of the data it was concluded that many parents (88%) were in the favour of female education that was contradicting to research conducted by Nevtaj and Naimatullah (2014) who found 52% parents to be in favour of boys' schooling as compared with that of girls. According to the results 60.5% of the respondents agreed with the statement that higher education teaches girls good manners that leads to make girls good house wives and also good mothers in future, however, it was overall 24% reported earlier by Shabbir et al. (2003). 51.5% respondents strongly agreed with the statement that educating female means educating family and it teaches good manners so females must pursue the education and this statements was not in accordance with findings in which education was considered to be a reason of bad practices for girls to which more than one-fifth of fathers (22.9%) agreed (Nevtaj and Naimatullah, 2014). The study showed that 39% of parents were in favour to allow their daughters to do job while 61% strongly disagreed with the statement.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made on the basis of this study

- Despite some security uncertainties, parents were willing to educate their daughters. So provision of adequate facilities like transportation and security to the females' educational institutions can bring a positive change.
- Many parents were unable to bear the expenditures of their daughter's higher education so government should provide free education for needy students till graduation level and announce more

scholarships. In order to educate their daughters, poor parents must be provided with stipends.

- Government should establish separate educational institutions for females in order to facilitate the people with education systems according to their religious demands. Many people do not send their daughters to higher educational institutions due to co-education system. More educational institutions for females should be established.
- Govt. should try to appoint female staff in females' educational institutions. Female staff should be provided with good incentive in order to appreciate and motivate parents for higher education of their daughters.
- Awareness should be created among parents about the importance of females' higher education.
- Female school up gradation is highly mandatory.
- The actual directions of Islam concerning to the importance of education should be highlighted so that people may learn and educate their daughters with respect of Islamic point of view.

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